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SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

June 23, 2021

Annual Meeting After Thoughts

What makes for a good Annual Meeting? As we reflect on this past weekend's Annual Meeting, I have heard several comments that lift up various elements that helped make our gathering a great Annual Meeting! The theme "Healing Forward" seemed to resonate with folks; the Worship Team worked diligently to design the worship, reflecting the theme and highlighting Conference leaders and music from various local churches. Both Worship Services can be viewed at www.secucc.org/youtube.



We also had the opportunity to build some community: 66 people attended the Friday night Social Hour where we interacted in small groups and cheered as raffle prizes were given out! We had the opportunity to learn: from the wonderful and challenging Juneteenth Presentation on Thursday by Bishop Yvette Flunder (also on the YouTube channel) to the eleven Workshops on Saturday. The workshops were recorded, giving registrants access to view the ones they missed (information on how to do that will be emailed to registrants).

Delegates also had the opportunity to discern directions for the Conference: electing new leadership on the Board of Directors, approving the 2021-2022 budget, and calling the Rev. Kim Wood as the new Conference Minister.

It was indeed a good, even great Annual Meeting! We had 140 registrants, and I could feel the lively spirit of the Southeast community through the zoom connection! We will put the Annual Meeting Minutes on the

Conference website at a later date for those of you who missed it. Thank you to all who participated! Blessings, Char Burch

Blessings! Char Burch

Highlights from Annual Meeting

Call of a New Conference Minister

A highlight of the Annual Meeting was the calling of the Rev. Kim Wood as the settled Conference Minister! The vote was concluded with clapping and celebration! Rev. Wood expects to begin in the Fall, after she completes her ministry with the Illinois Conference and relocates to the Southeast Conference. (Rev. Char Burch will continue as the Transitional Conference Minister until she arrives.) If you missed the information about Rev. Wood, her biography [can be found on our Conference website](#).



We offer special thanks to the Search Committee who spent months considering potential candidates. Their report is on the website with the other reports prepared for the Annual Meeting. Members of the Search Committee were: Bea Forniss, chairperson (First Congregational, Montgomery, AL), J Mason Davis III (First Congregational, Birmingham, AL), Penny Hensley (Phoenix Christian Congregational, Wildersville, TN), Rev. Haley Lerner (Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta GA), Rev. Tricia Lytle (Peace Congregational, Clemson, SC), Rev. Steven Miller (Virginia-Highland Church, Atlanta, GA), Rev. Troy Sanders (Rehoboth Fellowship, Atlanta GA), Rev. Diane Tugel (Brookmeade Congregational, Nashville, TN), Dr. Dana Williams (Unity Worship Center, Montgomery, AL).



So Many Thank You's

Many people should be recognized for their time and hard work in making the Annual Meeting possible: The Annual Meeting Planning Committee, Worship participants, Worship leaders, Social Hour Emcees, our Tech Team, and our Sponsors. We also thank Ugena Whitlock as the moderator who guided us through the Business session. [Click here to view the list](#) of those who helped to make the Annual Meeting a successful event.

Newly Elected Leaders

The following individuals were elected to the Board of Directors: Pam Mack as Secretary (Peace Congregational, Clemson, SEC), Michael Bowen as Treasurer (Spirit of the Cross, Huntsville, AL), Rev. Jennifer Baker as chairperson of the Stewardship and Finance Committee (Bethany Congregational Church, Thomasville, GA), Marcia Bentley as chairperson of the Commission on Ministry (First Congregational, Birmingham) and Members at Large: Rev. Jennifer Crane Crenshaw (Brookmeade Congregational, Nashville, TN), Rev. Bennie Liggins (Unity UCC, Montgomery, AL), and Rev. Larry Johnson (Union UCC, Tougaloo, MS). The following were elected to the Conference Nominating Committee: Rev. Ralph Thompson (Howard Congregational, Nashville, TN) and Rev. James Banks (Bethany Congregational, Thomasville, GA). The complete list of the Board of Directors and Nominating Committee [can be found here](#) on the Conference website.

News from the Conference Office

Ecclesiastical Council for Tonya Barnett and Rev. Dr. Valencia Jackson

The Commission on Ministry invites you to the Ecclesiastical Councils of Tonya Barnett (top photo) and Rev. Dr. Valencia Jackson (bottom photo) on Thursday, June 24th at 5:00 pm Eastern / 4:00 pm Central on Zoom.

Ecclesiastical Councils (ECs) are the last step in the process for both Members in Discernment and for Ministers transferring their credentials to the United Church of Christ from another denomination called the Privilege of Call. As part of the EC, you, members of the Southeast Conference, will have the opportunity to listen to the work of the Spirit and vote to Ordain Tonya Barnett and transfer Rev. Dr. Valencia Jackson's Ordination to the United Church of Christ. [Learn more about both candidates on our website.](#)

The Ecclesiastical Council will be held online via Zoom. [REGISTER](#)



From the Generosity Coordinator

Greetings ALL,

My heart is filled with thanksgiving, gratitude, and joy for ALL the ways you have continued to support this Southeast Conference United Church of Christ.

Amid this continuing Pandemic/Covid-19, your faith has not faltered, and you continue to support in so many ways....IN SPITE OF!! We remain grateful for everything that you do to represent this conference. We are the smallest conference in this denomination, and we cover: Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, and a small portion of Florida. WE REPRESENT!!! We are a small conference doing BIG things.

I am so excited that our churches are starting to open and look forward to when we can again be together in person.

Annual Meeting was terrific, and it was so great to see all your smiling faces. A huge note of thanks to ALL of you for your presence.



"GOD IS STILL SPEAKING" and we WILL CONTINUE IN FAITH, AS WE JOURNEY!!

Love and Blessings, Min. Carrole

Clergy Zoom Connections for June

- **An Hour of Conversations and Prayer**

Tuesday, June 29 (continuing weekly) - 11:00 a.m. Eastern (10:00 a.m. Central); Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/479440102>

Re-Opening of Churches – Conversation for all Church Leaders

- **Monday, June 28, 7 pm Eastern/6 pm Central**

Many churches are moving to in-person worship. This is an opportunity to learn about each other's experiences, recommendations, etc. We invite all Moderators, Church Leaders, and Clergy to be part of the conversation. [REGISTER](#)



Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2021. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

[Week of June 20](#)

- Midway Congregational UCC; Midway, Georgia
- Dorinda Broadnax
- Brenda Green
- Dorothy Owen
- Brice Thomas

Week of June 27

- Evergreen Congregational UCC; Beachton, Georgia
- Leslie Brogan
- Sam Greening
- Shannon Michael Pater
- John Pearson
- Merianna Harrelson

Prayer Requests

- Please lift up prayers for healing for **Rev. Susan Webeler** (pastor of Sandy Creek UCC, Lafayette, AL) who is recovering from a stroke, and **Rev. Ellen Sims** (recently retired in Nashville, TN) who continues in treatment for cancer.
- We pray for the family of **Rev. Darrell Duncombe** (First Congregational, Montgomery, AL) as they grieve the passing of Rev. Duncombe on June 2, and for First Congregational who in the midst of their grief will be seeking new pastoral leadership.

Churches in Transition

First Congregational, Montgomery AL; First Congregational, Savannah GA; Trinity Congregational, Athens AL; Rush Memorial, Atlanta GA; United Church of Cookeville, Cookeville TN

News from the Wider Church

General Synod – Registration for Visitors

July 11-18 (Mostly Evenings)

This is a great opportunity to experience General Synod without leaving home! Visitors are invited to register and join in the various activities: 3 Worship Services, 2 Keynote Speakers, 50 Workshops, Business Sessions, as well as special events sponsored by various groups related to the UCC. For

the schedule and program information, go to generalsynod.org. The registration cost is \$100.



National Open and Affirming Sunday

June 27 is National Open and Affirming Sunday! Always celebrated on the fourth Sunday of June, the Coalition created ONA Sunday as an opportunity for congregations to renew their commitment to support LGBTQIA+ neighbors and their families. On June 7, we'll release an inspiring worship and music video, along with worship resources to help you build your own ONA service. Let's celebrate the rapid growth of our movement, hold our 1,700 ONA churches and ministries in prayer, and commit to growing our movement until the UCC is not just 33%, but 100% ONA! Check the Coalition's website at <https://openandaffirming.org>.



Conference Calendar

June 24 @ 5:00 pm - 7:30 pm EDT

[Ecclesiastical Council for Tonya Barnett and Rev. Dr. Valencia Jackson](#)

June 29 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT

[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

July 6 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT

[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

July 11 - July 18

[UCC General Synod 2021](#)

July 13 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT

[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

July 15 @ 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm EDT

[Live Harp Meditations for Ministers](#)

View the **full calendar** of events online: <https://www.secucc.org/events/>

Contact Us

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